

MEMORANDUM

January 30, 1953

TO: Mr. Nelson C. Jackson, Director
Community Services

FROM: Roy E. Morris
Field Representative

SUBJ: Field Visit to Trenton, Philadelphia and Camden
January 28th and 29th, 1953

Purpose of Visit:

To locate and/or set up proper machinery for locating good Negro prospects for employment at Fairless Works.

To locate those persons who are reported to have made down-payments on so-called Jim Crow housing in Bucks County.

Background Information:

At the NUL Board-Staff Committee meeting on Monday, January 26, 1953, I was requested to determine as quickly as possible what resources are in Trenton, Philadelphia and Camden, with respect to our plan of making direct referrals to Fairless Works, and closely following the progress of those people referred.

Problems Presented:

Only two days could be spent on this assignment in time to report findings for the next meeting of the NUL Board-Staff Bucks County Committee on Friday, January 30th. State Employment Service offices in each of the cities mentioned were contacted and found to be completely cooperative after thorough discussion of mutuality of our objectives. Unfortunately, very few local residents could be seen in each community, because of their being at work or otherwise unavailable during the few hours spent in each city.

Action Taken:

Employment - In addition to the three cities mentioned above, I visited Bristol and its State Employment Service also. The Bristol manager was out of town. In each office, out of lengthy discussion, evolved an understanding that counsellors of both male and female job applicants compile a list of better than average Negro applicants and forward that list to me. It was decided that we should draw off the names and addresses and draw up a brief paragraph about each such person between the ages of 18 and 40, with more interest in those between 18 and 25. Persons over 25 would be considered

only if their past experience or training is particularly well suited for such jobs that we might refer them to.

I attended the annual dinner meeting of the Carver YMCA and Community Center in Trenton on Wednesday evening. My attendance was at the request and insistence of the President of the Carver Board and the Chairman of the Carver Center Board. It was thought that persons in attendance there would be very good people with whom I might discuss the purpose of my trip to Trenton. I was able to get across our interest in finding likely persons to some half dozen well placed community leaders. However, it is very interesting that the President of the Carver Board mentioned during the discussion of achievements of the Carver YMCA during the past year, that an official of Fairless Works had suggested to him that he send to Fairless Works any Negro interested in taking apprenticeship training. This was reported as a job to be credited to the YMCA.

Present at this meeting were Mr. Garrol Moore, Executive Director, Delaware Valley United Fund, Mr. Peter Auerbach, Executive Director, Trenton Council of Social Agencies, Mrs. John C. Merrill, Executive Director, Trenton Council of Human Relations, Mr. Hill, President of Baldwin-Hill Corporation, as well as the heads or representatives of some 15 local social agencies. After the meeting, Mr. Moore and Mr. Hill, while talking with me, asked if the announcement made about Fairless Works was the result of National Urban League efforts with United States Steel Company. I replied that certainly a lot of groups have been working with this problem but that I was not at liberty to discuss the details of our evaluation of the situation at this time. Later, Mrs. Merrill asked the same question of me and insisted that I give her more information than I had to Mr. Moore. I remarked that our Board-Staff Committee has been meeting twice a week for the past few weeks on our efforts in Bucks County; that shortly I will be able to make some statements regarding the present status of our work. This satisfied Mr. Merrill. However, it is understood that when I am next in Trenton, I will spend some time with both Mr. Moore and Mr. Auerbach, as well as with Mrs. Merrill, and bring them up to date as I may be at liberty to do at that time.

Mrs. Merrill apologized for the failure of the Trenton Human Relations Council with respect to the training project that I recommended for Trenton and that was referred to TOHR by the Trenton Council of Social Agencies.

Mr. Auerbach suggested that I see him on my next trip, to look at the material coming in on a survey being made of racial aspects of living conditions and also on the "two-headed" structure of the Carver YMCA. He feels that this is important information on which we should clear.

Housing - In Bristol I talked with Mrs. McGruder and attempted to run down what is apparently only a rumor, that Negroes have made down-

payments on properties being built in Jim Crow developments. No person spoken with had any definite information. Moreover, Mrs. McGruder, herself, is now of the opinion that no such down payments by anyone have been made. However, a Mr. Larabee of the American Friends Service Committee, said that someone observed a Negro in the settlement office of Levitt Company, and believes that this Negro was there for the purpose of completing the process of purchasing a Levitt home. This too is rumor but will have to be investigated on my next trip. No further information could be secured about it while there.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

We now have the machinery to turn up good prospects for our purposes in four cities mentioned above. On my next trip there, it is understood that I will interview such persons reported to me from each State Employment office and by local residents.

I indicated in each city that I would be there again in about two weeks. It seems, therefore, proper that I continue this specific effort on the general over-all plan of operation around February 16, 1953.

cc: Mr. Granger - Mr. Moss
Mr. Jackson
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Parrie
Miss Tansyhill - Mr. Finley - Mr. Pope
Dr. Banner